1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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CLOTHING

291 MEN.—The loin cloth, breechcloth, or waistcloth (M.: *palpura;*[17] T., P.: *wah;* U.: *ani*) was formerly the only article of dress worn by men on ordinary occasions. It consists of a long, narrow strip of bark cloth, 8 to 9 feet long and 12 to 15 inches wide, which is wrapped several times around the loins, while the ends are left to hang down in front and behind. Occasionally it was made from cotton, and ornamented with colored patterns. The loin cloth has now practically disappeared among the Miskito, being worn only by boys, but it is still in use among the grown-up Sumu. Now all the men from both tribes own loose cotton shirts (M.: *prak;* S.: *parak;* from the English "frock") and trousers (M.: *tráusis*, from the English; T., P.: *kal-anin;* U.: *kalson*, from the Spanish "calzón") with the tails generally not tucked in. They make these articles themselves from imported cloth or they obtain the finished garment by way of trade. Formerly the Sumu used a sort of shirt or poncho, consisting merely of a sheet of tree bark with a hole in the middle for the head; it was tied under each arm with a piece of fiber. This primitive garment was called *kahlâu* or *kahlo* by the Sumu; its Miskito name is unknown. When the Indian is in the open at the approach of rain he pulls his shirt off and covers it up with large *Heliconia* or *Musa* leaves in order to prevent it from getting wet.

[177] [439] [287]

WOMEN.—The only garment worn by the more primitive women of both tribes is a wrapper (M.: *kwaluntara;* T.: *ipnapan;* P.: *ipnapani, asna-pani, amat-pani;* U.: *asna-pahka*), a piece of cloth, 2½ to 3 yards in length, which is wrapped about the hips and extends from the waist, where it is fastened by tucking in one end, down to the knees. Nowadays it is made of imported bright-colored cloth, but formerly the common tunu bark cloth was used for this purpose. The upper part of the body was entirely naked in former days, but now the women wear a sleeveless garment of imported cotton goods, which is cut very open and is known by the English name *prak* (= "frock") among the Miskito; the Sumu call it *kahlâu* (T., P.) or *kahlo* (U.). Little girls wear a sort of loin cloth, as do the boys, but with broad end pieces which look like small aprons in front and behind; this garment is called *nika* by the Miskito and *taiai* by the Sumu.

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292 DRESS OF THE CHIEFS.—Men of rank wore, besides the loin cloth, a sleeveless cotton tunic (M.: *wipal;*[18] S.: *kiñkura*) which hung down to the knees; it was beautifully embroidered with the down of the muscovy duck and dyed by means of vegetable juices. A girdle, sash or belt (M.: *yalasawa;* S.: *bamak-sitna*) of the same material was tied around the waist over this sort of mantle; it was about 6 feet long and 6 inches wide.

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[17] This name is mentioned in 1699 under the form *purproy* (M. W.: 307, 308).

[18] Compare the word "huipil" in Mexican-Spanish.

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PRUDERY.—The sentiment of prudery is natural with these people. Few of them will submit to medical examination and on that account there are few Indians working at the gold mines of Pispis, where every applicant for work is obliged to pass such an examination.

DRESSMAKING.—All the various garments were made formerly from tree bark or cotton. Raveneau de Lussan (439) states, however, that the Miskito made also clothing and blankets from a grayish stuff which they obtained from the bastard palm (cabbage palm?). The clothes (M.: *kwala;* S.: *asna*) from imported cotton goods are generally made by the men. Hand sewing machines may be met with in many huts. Needles (M.: *silak;* T., P.: *silip;* U.: *akusa*, from the Spanish "aguja") are bought in the local shops. The washing of the clothes is, however, the work of the women, who beat them at the river banks with wooden clubs (*tamtam*); the leaves and the fruits of a small tree (*Sapindus saponaria* L.; M. &. S.: *sniwawa*) are used as soap.

BODILY ORNAMENTATION AND DECORATION

BODY PAINTING.—Black and red paint is still applied as an ornament, but more frequently the object is to protect the skin from the sting of certain insects, from the rays of the tropical sun, and even the cold. Perhaps originally this was also done in order to scare the enemy at a battle, for the body was painted in a very hideous manner when an armed expedition was being organized. The paint replaces to some extent the Indian's clothing. The black color is made use of by the men and the red by the women, just as was already the custom among the Miskito during the latter half of the seventeenth century (Exquemelin, Engl. ed.: 252).

The reddish pigment, which may vary from yellow to brown, is obtained from the seeds of a shrub or small tree, called annatto (arnotto) and faroah in the British colonies of tropical America, and "achote" or "achiote" by the Spaniards; the Dutch in Surinam call it "orlean," while the French have given it the name "rocou," from *ruku* or *uruku*, used by certain Indian tribes of Brazil and the Guianas. Its botanical name is *Bixa orellana* L.; the word *Bixa* is derived from the ancient language of Haiti.

The seeds are gathered as soon as the capsules split open, and put in boiling water to remove the testa, or waxy substance, surrounding them. This red waxy coloring matter is then passed through a sieve and made to coagulate with the aid of the leaves of the *tiwat* tree or the seeds from the "ojo de buey" (*Mucuna* sp.; M.: *kwakus;* S.: *wabala*). It is kept in small calabashes or bottles, which may be seen depending from the rafters of the Indian hut. Before use the pigment is tempered with native vegetable oils. It is applied by

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HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS

352 BEDS AND TABLES.—The primitive Indian bed, which has practically disappeared, consisted merely of a layer of tree bark, Heliconia leaves, or deer skin, spread on the ground; it is known among the Miskito by the name *puhlak taya* "balsa tree bark," while the Sumu call it *takal* (T., P.) and *lim* (U.).

Nowadays stages of split bamboo serve indiscriminately as beds and tables. These structures (M.: *krikri;* S.: *kirikiri*) are raised about 3 feet from the ground and are supported by four strong posts. Instead of sheets of bamboo the whole may be covered with wild cane sticks. Sheets of pounded tree bark serve as blankets
513 and as bed sheets (M.: *nina-pala, munta-pala;* T., P.: *dañ-rina;* U.: *dañ-paknak*); in Honduras the Miskito also use mats (*tnasi*) made from a rush growing around the swamps and lagoons. Pillows (M.: *tilar*, corrupted from the English; S.: *tunana*) are stuffed with cotton
[824] or the fiber surrounding the seeds of the silk cotton and of the balsa trees. The Miskito living at the mouth of Rio Patuca slice the upper part of the stem of the small "palmetto" palm, which grows in the neighborhood, and use the thin flakes to stuff pillows and mattresses. The mosquito nets, called *pabulo* by both tribes, are made of opaque
● [439] cotton sheeting of foreign manufacture, so that each bed forms practically a separate compartment.

HAMMOCKS.—While at home, hammocks (M.: *silmika;* S.: *wah*) are seldom used during the night, and then only by unmarried boys and girls. They are, however, carried along on long journeys. During the day the men dream away much time in the hammocks, but the women use them rarely. They may be made of cotton, tree bark, or Bromelia fibers.

CRADLES.—In former days cradles (M.: *kuhsañ;* T., P.: *pala;* U.:
854 *lim*) were used by the Sumu in connection with the habit of flattening the heads of babies. (See under Deformation of body.) Since this practice has gone out of use cradles have disappeared entirely and small hammocks are now used for the children. The dried claws of crabs and other objects were tied to the cradle, making a strange rattling noise at each movement.

STOOLS.—Low wooden stools (M.: *sulati;* T., P.: *sini;* U.: *panba*)
352 with three or four legs and a flat or concave surface, hewn from solid blocks of wood, are used by the women, unless they sit directly on the ground. They may be square or oblong and suggest the stone metates found in the ancient sites. They range in size from diminutive forms used as toys by the children to benches of over 3 feet in length. When a stranger arrives at the Indian hut one of these seats or a hammock will immediately be offered to him.

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4/2 companion at work and on voyage, and the main tool in house, garden, field, and bush. The Indian uses it to dig postholes for his house, to cut down small trees, shrubs, lianas, grass, or weeds. With the machete he cuts down the underbrush when making a plantation and clears the latter from time to time of weeds and young bush. With the machete he also defends himself against wild animals, snakes, and the like, and, if necessary, against his own kind, which is often more dangerous than the wild beasts of the forest.

●[839] Formerly all the machetes used on the Mosquito Coast were imported from England, but in later years they were brought from the United States and from Germany.

4/2 3/3 AXES.—The Indians are very good at plying the ax (M.: *asa*, from the Spanish "hacha"; S.: *ki*, *kidak*), as many of them have been working at the mahogany camps. The export of this valuable wood has been going on with various long interruptions for over two centuries. Even the women handle the ax fairly well, and cut up small tree stems to be used as firewood. The rectangular-shaped so-called American felling axes or Canada wedge axes are preferred by these Indians; in shape they resemble somewhat the *tuba* fish, and for that reason the Miskito call them *tub'asa*.

4/2 1/2 STONE AXES.—Single or double bladed stone axes or celts (M.: *alwani mahbra*, *imyula mahbra;* S.: *alwana suma*, lit.: "thunder egg" or "lightning egg") have been unearthed in various parts of the country. They are grooved or ungrooved, and were firmly fixed in the thick part of a stone-cut wooden handle, or the handle was merely tied firmly to the ax with the aid of a withe passing around the groove. Some of these celts were provided with a short handle cut of the same solid rock. Dampier (I, 85) mentions some good grooved axes among the Indians of Rio Escondido (Kukra-Sumu), which were "flat and sharp at both ends," and were 10 inches long, 4 inches broad, and 3 inches thick in the middle.

Two simple stone axes from the Mosquito Coast have been depicted by Bovallius (II, 299, figs. 81, 82). Three fine monolithic axes from the Bluefields region have been described and illustrated by Saville (b: 34–36, fig. 15). The blade of these axes is of a form foreign to Central America, resembling certain axes from the Lesser Antilles and northern South America. In these three specimens the rounded handle, which has a length of 12 to 12½ inches, is slightly curved. They are respectively in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation (a), the Peabody Museum of Harvard University (b), and the United States National Museum (c). The first one of them (a) was acquired in 1924 in Nicaragua by Mr. D. E. Harrower. The blade is comparatively longer than in the other axes of this type and the handle is elaborately finished, being decorated with three series of longitudinal grooves. The second ax (b) is carved from a

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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gold mines; or they work as paddlers on the rivers, which are practically the only means of communication.

The Sumu, on the other hand, are more timid and less enterprising. They are unwilling to leave their wives and children for a length of time in order to work for the benefit of the white man. Besides, even to this day, their wants are few, and they can easily do without practically any article of foreign manufacture. Formerly, however, many of them were active as rubber bleeders, but owing to East Indian competition, the export of that commodity from the Mosquito Coast has stopped altogether.

TRADE AND BARTER

INTERCHANGE OF COMMODITIES.—Among such rude hunting and fishing tribes as the Miskito and Sumu only a very restricted trade can have existed in former days. The rivers, lagoons, and the sea were practically the only means of communication, and this is still the case. The interchange of commodities was generally effected by barter. The Miskito appear to have also employed beads of sea shells as money, while the Sumu of the interior used cacao beans for the same purpose.[38] We are told by M. W. (304) that these two tribes, which were continually in a state of hostility, observed a truce on appointed days; they then met on an island in the lower Rio Coco for the purpose of trading.

These Indians live under an almost perfect equality, and there are no rich or poor among them. They do not strive to accumulate wealth, and the great unwearied exertion, found among our civilized societies, is unknown among them.

FORMER ARTICLES OF BARTER.—The Miskito used to evaporate salt from the water of the sea and lagoons and collect pretty sea shells suitable for beads. These commodities were exchanged with the Sumu for pottery, cotton goods, hammocks, bark cloth, and rough canoes.

During the latter part of the seventeenth century, and for many years following, the Miskito undertook daring sea voyages as far south as Chiriqui Lagoon in Panama, and occasionally even beyond that region. These expeditions were, however, not organized with peaceful trading in view, but for the purpose of stealing cacao from the Spanish settlers at Rio Matina (Costa Rica), and capturing Indians to be sold to the English traders of Jamaica.

PRESENT-DAY COMMODITIES.—Nowadays the Indian's wants from the outside world are many. The Miskito, who are less primitive than their neighbors, were already in commercial relations with

[38] According to G. N. Collins (see Safford in Smithsonian Report for 1916, p. 421) this use still persists in the Mexican State of Chiapas.

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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the English freebooters of Jamaica during the latter part of the seventeenth century. The most important of the foreign-made articles, which are now considered indispensable to the bulk of the Indians, are the following: Salt, machetes, axes, knives, adzes, hoes, light 3-legged iron cooking pots, fishhooks, triangular files, shotguns with ammunition (powder, shot, percussion caps), cotton goods of various patterns (calico, gingham, salampores, drilling, blue dungaree), bright-colored handkerchiefs, ribbons, thread, needles, beads, combs, small looking-glasses, jew's-harps, clay pipes, tobacco, etc. In order to obtain these commodities the Indians will work for a short time as day laborers, or sell some forest or agricultural products. Very little value is placed upon labor performed at home, and certain homemade articles, which have taken a considerable time to prepare, are often bartered for a mere trifle.

METAL WORKING

Gold ornaments appear to have been known in pre-Columbian days and were used for ceremonial purposes and for personal decoration. Breastplates of wrought gold were already observed by Columbus in 1502 at Cariay, but this locality must be placed in the territory of Costa Rica and not on the Mosquito Coast, as has been done by various historians. About 1699 silver breastplates, either bought from the Europeans or hammered by themselves out of silver coins, formed part of the gala dress of the Miskito (M. W.:308); they may have been emblems or insignia of authority.

Ornaments of gold were probably introduced among the Miskito and Sumu by way of trade from the Pacific side of Nicaragua or from the Talamanca region of Costa Rica, where they were common. They were probably the work of the Chiriqui goldsmiths, who had attained a high degree of skill in the making of low-grade gold objects. But they must have existed very sparingly on the Mosquito Coast, for in recent days none has been discovered in the country. Figurines and amulets of the precious metal are said to have been discovered in the Pispis mining district, around Cucra Hill, on the Rio Wawa, and at El Dorado (Honduras), but these reports need confirmation.

The rude tribes of the Mosquito Coast did not know the art of working gold, copper, bronze, or any other metal; this art was known, however, to the Indians of Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, and other regions of America in pre-Columbian days. Placer mining is carried on in many parts of the country by whites, negroes, and Ladinos, but not by the Indians. There is no reliable record of the Miskito and Sumu knowing how to wash gold from the sands of the numerous auriferous streams before the arrival of the Europeans. Even to-day

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316 this is done by them in isolated cases only; they use a round, low bowl or *batea*, in which they place some of the auriferous sand together with some water. Then, whirling the *batea* rapidly, a feathery stream of mingled sand and water flows constantly over the edge. When the sand is nearly all exhausted, the bowl is filled again, and this process is repeated a number of times. Finally a little deposit of grains of gold will be found at the bottom.

These Indians have no name in their own language for either gold or silver, but they call these precious metals "yellow money" and "white money" respectively. Their word for money (M. and T.: *lala;* P. and U.: *lihwan*) might have designated gold originally, or perhaps metal in general. Still, there is a native name for iron or steel (M. and T.: *silak;* P. and U.: *yasama*).

301 Cheap bracelets, earrings, and finger rings of foreign origin are
● 439 now very common among both tribes. The iron and steel objects,
411 which are now in universal use on the coast, have not been cast or forged locally, but have been obtained in trade. Harpoons are made from our common triangular files with the aid of another file. This process is very slow and tedious. The iron points or "heads" for arrows and spears are generally made from old cask hoops or from other scrap iron.

STONEWORK

324 METATES.—Stonework is practically limited to the manufacture of crude metates or maize grinders (M.: *walpa-akbaya;* T., P.: *ki-watak;* U.: *ki-tiknaka*) which are used for grinding maize, cacao, or other grains or fruits. They are merely plane slabs of a tufflike rock with a slightly concave grinding surface, on which the grains are crushed with the aid of a handle or metlapil (M.: *walpa-mihta;* S.: *ki-mak*). These crude metates are made with the aid of a hard blackish stone chisel (M.: *kwa-siksa;*[37] T., P.: *pransa, paransa;* U.: *ki-tisna*).

324 ANTIGUALES.—Elaborate metates, cylindrical bowls and mortars
172 of a hard granitelike material are occasionally found on the Mosquito Coast. Isolated specimens of these articles are met with, but as a rule they are found in deposits from miniature size, perhaps children's toys, to giant sizes for ceremonial purposes. These objects exist in all stages of manufacture, but the finished product is now very scarce, having either been taken away or broken.

Such old sites or "antiguales," as they are known locally, are especially numerous in Honduras between the rivers Plátano and Paulaya; they are found generally on some elevated spot within a

[37] At Ciudad Antigua, in the Nicaraguan department of Nueva Segovia, I heard this tool called "cuabul" (=*kwa-bul*) by the Spanish-speaking inhabitants. In the Miskito language *siksa* means "black," while *bul* is "mottled" or "speckled."

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WRITING.—The carvings on one of the bowlders at the Kiwras Rapids on Rio Coco are said to resemble somewhat the characters of the Latin alphabet. Wickham (b: 245) heard of some "writing" on rocks of Rio Mico, which he considered—quite erroneously of course—inscriptions in Latin made by the early Jesuit missionaries. Neither Miskito nor Sumu appear to have possessed the art of writing as did their western neighbors, the Nicarao and Chorotega. According to Oviedo the two latter tribes had books of parchment made from deer skins. Picture writing was also practiced, and is still, by the Cuna Indians of Panama, as has recently been ascertained by Nordenskiöld.[39]

RUBBER COLLECTING

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In former days the Indians used to collect rubber from a wild-growing tree (*Castilla* sp.), which is found nearly all over the country. This industry started about 1860, first on Rio San Juan, and gradually spread to the remainder of the Mosquito Coast. The Indians sold their rubber to the local merchants, who generally made large advances to them. About 1912 and 1913, when the export of rubber ceased, owing to the low price caused by the large production of plantation rubber in the British and Dutch East Indies, many Indians found themselves heavily in debt to the merchants.

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The rubber collectors or "huleros" first made a rude ladder out of the lianas that hang from the trees; this was done by tying short pieces of wood across them with the aid of smaller lianas. Later iron spurs were introduced and attached to the feet to climb the trees. With the machete they then scored the bark with cuts having the shape of the letter V, the point being downward. Such cuts were made all the way up the trunk, at a distance of about 3 feet from each other; they extended nearly round the tree, but the latter was on no account to be completely girdled. At the bottom of these series of cuts a spout was inserted to conduct the latex juice into buckets or other containers. In about half an hour all the whitish milk had run out of the tree.

Afterwards the latex was strained and caused to coagulate by the addition of an alkaline decoction made from the juice of the chajmol vine (*Ipomoea bona-nox* L.; M.: *tatako;* T. and P.: *tutuk;* U.: *ulupuy*) or from that of a liana (*Calonyction speciosum*); this was combined with the latex in the proportion of 1 pint to 2 gallons. To prevent putrefaction coagulation must be effected within about 24 hours after the collection of the milk. The resulting mass was then made into round flat cakes, which were exported under the name "sheet rubber"

[39] Picture Writings and Other Documents. Comparative Ethnographical Studies, vol. 7, part 1 (1928) and part 2 (1930).

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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it with sulphur. They apply a thin coat of the milk on cloth for the making of waterproof traveling bags, hunter's bags, and ponchos or raincoats. This industry is, however, chiefly in the hands of the Ladinos.

WOOD CARVING.—Wooden stools (M.: *sulati;* T., P.: *sini;* U.: *panba*), carved with the machete and the adze from a solid block of wood, are in universal use. In olden times these stools had three well-centered, elaborately decorated legs and a beautiful bird or animal head, reminding much of the metates which are occasionally found in the ancient sites.

Formerly a sort of walking stick or scepter of hard wood, surmounted by a carved human head, was an insignium of office and authority, but this custom has been introduced apparently by the English or Spanish, as there is no native name for it. Similar sticks now belong to the outfit of the Miskito sukya.

The central house post of the old-fashioned Sumu hut was also elaborately carved. The art was also practiced on various wooden domestic implements, as for instance the large wooden spoons (M.: *kustara;* T., P.: *pan-yamna;* U.: *kusaro*) and the cradles (M.: *kuhsan;* T., P.: *pala;* U.: *lim*). Wood carvings generally represent animal or human heads, or geometric figures, rarely floral designs. At the festivals of the dead celebrated by the Miskito headdresses carved into animal or human heads are sometimes worn.

ENGRAVED CALABASHES.—The common calabashes (M.: *kahmi, kami;* S.: *sutak*) of the Miskito and Sumu are often engraved with simple geometric designs, such as triangles, circles, zigzag lines, parallelograms, which recall those used in tattooing, on pottery vessels and painted tunu cloth, or the ones found on the large river bowlders. According to the Indians, however, these are merely impromptu inventions and serve no other purpose but that of identifying their calabashes. An elaborately carved and painted calabash, obtained from a Sumu chief of Rio Bocay, has been described and depicted by Sapper (f, 206–210).

BEADWORK.—The women of both tribes are very clever in making pretty bead ornaments of various colors to be worn around neck, wrist, below the knee, and above the ankle; the men also occasionally use them as watch fobs and as hatbands. The designs are chiefly animal, especially of snakes. Two patterns of beadwork have been pictured by Sapper (a, 274), one representing paddle handles, the other the skin of the *rikaya* salamander. The Indians utilize small glass beads (M.: *lilyura;* T., P.: *ala;* U.: *tasanka*), which they obtain from the foreign traders. The colors preferred are green, blue, black, and white, while red, brown, and yellow are only sparingly used. Fellechner (137), however, states that the blue beads are not liked by the Miskito and that the red and yellow ones are preferred by

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them. White thread and small needles (M.: *silak;* T., P.: *silip;* U.: *akusa*, from Spanish "aguja") of foreign manufacture are employed to string the beads.

NAVIGATION AND CANOE MAKING

Travel is effected chiefly by canoe, for there are hardly any roads in the country outside of the hunting trails; the numerous navigable rivers intersecting the country form, together with the lagoons and the sea, the means of communication.

The Miskito inhabiting the immediate seashore from Cabo Gracias a Dios on southward are excellent seamen; they were already noted for their courage on the sea by the buccaneers (Raveneau de Lussan: 440). The Miskito living to the north of that settlement, however, navigate the lagoons and rivers, and rarely venture on the sea. The Indians living inland, on the other hand, are afraid of the sea and of the large lagoons, but they are perfectly at home in the bush, and they are very expert in navigating the river boats through the dangerous falls and rapids.

BRIDGES.—The liana bridges, which are met with in other parts of Central America, are unknown on the Mosquito Coast. The Miskito and Sumu occasionally make a crude bridge over a narrow creek by felling a tree across it. Canoes are used everywhere for the crossing of the streams.

TYPES OF CANOES.—Two sorts of dugout canoes are used on the Mosquito Coast. The "dori," or keeled canoe, is used to navigate the sea and lagoons, while the "pitpan," or flat-bottomed canoe, is employed on the rivers. The sea canoes are fast sailors, but somewhat "cranky." All these boats are hollowed out by means of the adze; the largest specimens, cut out of the solid tree, without any addition, may reach up to 5 feet beam and 40 feet in length.

PITPAN.—The "pitpan" is a long narrow boat with flat bottom, drawing but little water; it is therefore particularly fitted to navigate the shallow creeks of the interior which abound in rapids and falls. It glides noiselessly over the water and is easily steered, but it is very cranky and the slightest motion renders it liable to upset. It is therefore of no use on the sea. The pitpan has a square projecting bow and stern, like a small platform, large enough for a person to stand on. A hole is made in the bow through which a pole is thrust perpendicularly in the ground, to moor at river banks or at shoals. The pitpan is very thick bottomed, and for that reason may sustain very rough handling in hauling it over the rocks at rapids and falls.

The name "pitpan," which is in general use among the English-speaking population of eastern Central America, is taken from the Miskito word *pitban*, which means plaited. It is claimed by some

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milked, their owners being unwilling to "rob" the calf, but the meat is esteemed.

HORSES.—Horses (M.: *aras*, from the English "horse") are not common, while mules and donkeys are conspicuous by their absence. The horse is sometimes used as a riding animal by the savanna Indians, but loads are transported either by canoe or on man's back. The Indians ride bareback and use a sort of bridle consisting of a rope made from bark fiber, which is tied loosely round the lower jaw, leaving two ends for reins. When swimming the horse in deep water, the rider gets off its back, at the upside in case of a running stream, and swims beside the animal, holding on by its mane. As soon as the horse touches bottom he gets on again. The manner employed in breaking a young horse is very simple. One man leads it with a rope into the water, to a depth of 3 or 4 feet. Then another man quickly jumps upon its back, whereupon the frightened animal begins to buck and skit. After a while it is completely exhausted and docile.

PIGS.—Pigs (M. and T.: *kuirku*, from the Spanish "puerco"; P. and U.: *kusi*, from the local Spanish "cuche") were already found occasionally among the Miskito at the end of the seventeenth century (M. W.: 310). Pork is rarely eaten by the Indians, and fattened hogs are sold to the foreigners and Ladinos. Little care is given to these animals; they are left to roam around and find a large part of their food themselves. At night they are kept in a pen adjoining the dwelling, or they are brought inside and tied to a post on account of the various felines preying upon them.

FOWL.—The domestic fowl (M.: *kalila*, from the Spanish "gallina") is found in every house. It is esteemed chiefly on account of the crowing power of the cock, which serves as a clock at night. The Miskito had already some fowls at the end of the seventeenth century (M. W.: 310). Among the Sumu this bird is called *sakara* and *katarama;* these appear to be onomatopœic names, and similar terms are met with in other parts of Central and South America.

DOGS.—In every Indian dwelling there roam about some sneaky, repulsive curs, ready to steal if they are left unwatched for an instant. They are kept as pets, as watch dogs, but above all, for the chase. Good hunting dogs, especially such as are trained to hunt the jaguar or the puma, are very highly valued. The Indians feed them but little, fearing that they will lose all interest in hunting. The dogs are therefore very lean and the bones of the long, thin body generally appear distinctly beneath the skin. They roam about the house during the night and make their lair at the foot of that of their masters; they are responsible for the bloodthirsty fleas which abound in the Indian dwellings.

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According to Belt (204) the Sumu living on the upper Rio Grande used to come periodically to the Spanish settlements in order to obtain dogs. They would barter a gun or a large iron pot for a single dog, if it was of the right color. Some Ladinos around Olama had even in those days commenced to rear dogs to supply the demand. These Indians had a special liking for black ones, and did not value those of any other color so much. Lehmann (c: I, 405) states that the Miskito formerly buried a red dog (*pâuan*) with a dead person, in order to serve the latter on his voyage to the underworld. However, the writer has never observed that either Sumu or Miskito have a preference for a certain color.

There is no record of the former existence on the Mosquito Coast of the "xulo" (xolotl) or barkless dog, which was tamed in the Pacific region of Nicaragua at the time of the conquest. The native names of the common dog (M.: *yul;* S.: *sul, sulu, solo*) bear a close affinity to that Nahuatl word. Allen has identified the barkless dog in question with the raccoon, which is, however, called *suksuk* by both Miskito and Sumu.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is not as highly developed on the Mosquito Coast as in the remainder of Honduras and Nicaragua; it furnishes, nevertheless, the principal means of subsistence.

PREPARING THE PLANTATION.—In order to make their plantation (M.: *insla;* S.: *yamak*) the Indians cut down a patch of the forest, generally on the bank of a navigable stream. The rough work, that is the felling of the trees and the clearing of the ground, is essentially man's work. The large hardwood trees are usually left standing, but all the other giants of the forest are cut down. This work takes place at the beginning of the dry season, about February or March. Toward the beginning of May fire is set to the tangled mass. When the ground has thus been prepared by the men, the women take charge of the future plantation, the planting and cutting down of the grass and weeds being their occupation. Sometimes the man and wife do the planting together. The harvesting is the work of the females.

The ax, machete, and "barreta" or pointed digging stick are the only agricultural implements. The great heat and moisture with the comparatively uniform temperature all the year round enable a constant succession of vegetation, and trees may bear fruit at all seasons. The soil is in general very fertile, but large areas of the country are covered with savannas with sandy and gravelly soil, which is entirely unfit for cultivation and produces only scanty grass, pines, oaks, and various species of scrubby plants. The Indians from this part of the country are therefore compelled to make their planta-

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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276 Still, it is not certain that tobacco was known to these two tribes in pre-Columbian days. Their names for the plant (M.: *twako;* S.: *aka*) point toward its introduction by the Europeans. The Indian tribes living on the Pacific side of Nicaragua at the time of the discovery knew tobacco, however, and they smoked it in the form of cigars. Our name "tobacco" comes from the word *tabaco*, which the Indians of Haiti applied to a sort of pipe. This instrument consisted of a small wooden tube, shaped like a Y; the two points of it were inserted into the nose, while the other extremity was held in the smoke of burning tobacco, and thus the fumes were inhaled.

At the present time the plant is not cultivated by the Indians under consideration. Leaf tobacco is imported from the United [439] States, and this foreign product is preferred to the one raised in Central America. Among the Sumu smoking is confined principally to the men, but this practice is common enough among Miskito women and children. The leaf is smoked chiefly in pipes (M.: *twako mina;* S.: *aka pan, aka pana*), which are made locally of clay, wood, or maize cobs; imported clay pipes are also bought in the shops. According to Wickham (c: 206), the Ulwa of Rio Escondido do not smoke the pipe, but use the leaf rolled roughly in cigar form made on European models. Very few chew tobacco, while the habit of snuffing is entirely unknown. Among the females the pipe is frequently passed round, each one of the women present taking a few puffs and then passing the pipe to her neighbor. A supply of tobacco is a readily accepted currency for the acquisition of food in the more primitive parts of the country. For small favors the traveler is also expected to give one or more tobacco leaves in exchange.

263 CAYENNE OR RED PEPPER.—Various species of very pungent, small red peppers (M.: *kuma;* S.: *anmak, añmak*), growing in a semiwild state on perennial shrubs (*Capsicum frutescens* L. and *C. baccatum* L.), are used with food as a stimulant and as an excitant. They were found in the Miskito kitchen during the times of Dampier (I, 9).

The Miskito usually prepare a "sauce" (M.: *kuma laya;* S.: *añmak wasni, añmak waska*) with these peppers, which they mash and then add some lime juice and salt. They store it in bottles and pour a small quantity of the liquid on their food while eating. The Sumu, on the other hand, grind the red peppers on the metate together with coarse salt. Upon serving the meal the women place a little of this mixture on a large leaf, and every one seasons his own food. These peppers may also replace salt entirely. The large "sweet" chilies (*Capsicum annuum* L.), which grow on annual plants, are also occasionally planted and eaten as a vegetable.

from the waist to the knees. Bark cloth is still used and is an excellent clothing material; tumu bark being the most commonly used. However, today both men and women obtain cheap cotton material from traders and with it fashion their clothes. No undergarments are worn. In former times gala costumes were worn at festivals; today the chiefs or head men will wear old coats obtained from foreign residents. Many Indian men buy hats, especially straw ones *(sombrero, sumruru, sumuru, trahat, tarahat)*. Women occasionally wear these hats, which constitute to them an ornament. Some Indians in villages wear footgear but this is rare. Most of them go barefoot. The washing of clothes is the women's work and it is done by beating the garments at river banks with wooden clubs *(tamtam)* and the use of soap made from the leaves and fruits of a small bushy tree *(Sapindus saponaria* L.).

In a previous report by Conzemius[1] it was stated that the black and red paint was applied to the skin as an ornament. This was in 1931; today this process is rarely executed although some still apply a reddish pigment (varying from yellow to brown) in order to protect against insects or the chapping effects of weather. The pigment is derived from the seeds of a shrub called annato (Spanish: *achote, achiote,* or *bija)* or rocour *(Bixa orellana L.)* The seeds are removed from the capsule and placed in boiling water. The red waxy material which separates is collected and coagulates when mixed with the leaves of the *tiswat* tree. It is usually mixed with one of the native vegetable oils prior to use. Black paint derived from tree gums are used by the Sumu as well as colored clays. In fact, colored clays have gained considerable favor during these later years.

Tattoo is rarely seen among the Río Coco inhabitants, even though it was commonly used. It is achieved by the simple method of puncturing the skin with steel needles and the application of gun powder into the incisions. Today necklaces and other decorations are rarely seen. Bead and shell necklaces were observed only on a few persons in the upper Coco River. In general one sees a few trinkets used which were obtained from traders.

The men cut their hair short and some of the tribal elders leave a lock of it just back of the crown of the head. The women have long hair except in front where it is common custom to cut just above the eyebrows. This prevents the hair from entering the eyes. Both sexes devote much care to the hair and oil it frequently. The oil *(batana)* is obtained from the seeds of the oil palm *(Elaeis melanoccoca)* and is mixed with rather potent perfumes obtained from traders. From these traders they also obtain inexpensive combs and brushes.

Although body deformation was carried out by Sumu especially

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
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TOOLS

Before the conquest the Miskito had very few tools and as has been pointed out by Conzemius[1] these Indians were living in a wood age rather than a stone age. Today the common tools in use are noted in the order of their importance. The machete *(ispara)*, a heavy knife varying from one to two feet in length is the most commonly used tool. It can be used for almost any purpose from clearing bush to ligging postholes. It can also be used as a weapon of defense as well as for cutting and slicing food. Second to the machete is the ax *(asa)* which is used for chopping trees and preparing timber. These axes are made of metal and stone *(alwani mahbra)*. Adzes *(ats)* are today in common use for the making of boats and other objects of wood. With the exception of the stone ax both the machete and the adze are of post Colombian origin.[1] Hoes have been introduced in the last century and these are used primarily for clearing weeds. A variety of knives *(skiro, kisuro)* are seen in all households and used not only to cut with for eating purposes as well.

DIVISION OF WORK

The husband prepares the patch of forest for the plantation. He cuts down the trees and clears the ground by fire. However, the major part of planting, weeding, and taking in the crop is left to the wife. The manufacture of hunting and fishing implements is the man's job. Fishing, however, is carried out by both men and women. The building of canoes is the man's work although women sometimes assist him in this arduous work. Men will cut trees for firewood but the women have to fetch the lengths of timber cut by the men.

It is customary for women to carry heavy loads but the men occasionally do. Heavy loads are placed on the back by the use of a carrying strap (*bombador*). Many of the women carry loads on their heads.

All the domestic industries such as weaving, spinning, cooking, etc., are female occupations. Tailoring, however, is shared by both the men and the women. The barbecuing of the chase is the only cooking men indulge in.

FUNCTIONAL ENTERPRISE

Interchange of commodities is commonly effected by barter but today there is an ever increasing use of currency (córdoba). Trading is carried out with traders and the Indians in many instances exchange

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
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cattle and other goods for objects of cheap manufacture. Yet these objects may be of real intrinsic value to the Indians and under such circumstances it is difficult to judge with fairness. However, in the larger settlements Indians have learned the true cost of materials and considerable agitation occurs in trading. Payment for services performed in isolated communities can be accomplished by the use of such commodities as salt and tobacco. In fact, many will prefer these to actual money: in the more remote areas money per se is meaningless and payment is performed with gifts.

These days there is an ever increasing want of objects from the outside world. The items most desired are salt, machetes, axes, knives, adzes, hoes, iron cooking pots, stoves, fish hooks, files, shotguns, ammunition, cotton goods, ribbons, blue dungarees, looking glasses, combs and tobacco. Cereal grains and flour are also desired.

The enterprise of the Indian today is centered mainly around the creation of useful objects. Such objects, therefore, are often used for exchange purposes. Stone work is limited to the manufacture of crude metates or maize grinders (walpa-akbaya) which are used for grinding maize. In the northern part of the Miskito coast a coarse brownish cloth is pounded from the inner bark of a tree closely resembling the rubber trees (*Castilla* sp.). The cloth as well as the tree is referred to as *tawa* or *tikan*. The bark cloth is made into sheets or blankets for bed use or into loin cloths (*palpura*). This cloth is of high value. Pottery once a valuable commodity to these Indians is not alonger made.

Today the main enterprise for the Miskito Indians for barter, exchange or payment are as follows: rubber collecting, banana agriculture, boat making, mine working, cattle and pig raising, general work on rivers, fur from wild animals, and general labor. However, it is to be noted that the Indian could and does in most instances subsist on his immediate environment.

VEGETABLE FOODS

Agriculture is not highly developed on the Mosquito coast, because the many plant-destroying insects limit the process of cultivable products, and the bush springs up early after the ground has been cleared. Thus after two or three crops have been obtained from a plantation (*banana*), a variety of weedy looking shrubs and grass, which make cultivation difficult, gets a hold on the land. The Indian then does not consider it worthwhile to undertake the labor needed to keep the ground clear but prefers to set up a new plantation (*insla*) by cutting down a patch of usable forest.